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# GCA of Hawaii

GENERAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

Quality People. Quality Projects.

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September 6, 2017

Honorable Ron Menor, Chair  
Honorable Ikaika Anderson, Vice Chair  
Honolulu City Council  
Kapolei Hale  
Honolulu, Hawaii

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**SUBJECT: OPPOSITION TO BILL 3 (2016), RELATING TO THE BUILDING CODE.** Amended Chapter 16 ("Building Code") of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 1990, with respect to construction barriers.  
**Full Council Meeting:** Wednesday, September 6, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.

Dear Chair Menor and Members of the Council,

The General Contractors Association of Hawaii (GCA) is an organization comprised of over 500 general contractors, subcontractors, and construction related firms. The GCA was established in 1932 and is the largest construction association in the State of Hawaii. GCA's mission is to represent its members in all matters related to the construction industry, while improving the quality of construction and protecting the public interest.

Bill 3 (2016) proposes to amend the building code to require a 12 x 12 inch opening every 25 feet in any barrier around a construction site, whether private or public. GCA **opposes** this measure because it is not necessary and may cause further safety concerns for workers and the public. Further this measure is broadly worded because there are exceptions where such viewing panels may not be necessary. At the previous Committee Hearing the Honolulu Police Department even expressed their concerns with this measure and opposed it due to the increased thefts among construction sites and how this measure may increase such.

First and foremost, the proponents of the bill mention that the intent is to allow inspectors to observe the safety of the project. Access to any construction site by regulatory agencies is not the issue because most regulatory agencies that require inspection of the site can gain ready access upon request, even with short or no notice. It should also be noted that almost every project being constructed here in Hawaii can be viewed from many vantage points, excluding federal projects, which require base access. Most projects have gates for vehicles and deliveries and employees to enter. These gates typically give a very wide view of the project activities. Most projects are multi-story which can allow observation of the project while looking over the barricades, if any. And most projects can be seen from adjacent structures which offer the best view of the entire project. Due to any regulatory access being available to city or state inspectors for various site visits, this measure will not make it easier for those individuals; instead it will make it easier for uninvited guests or thieves to scope out a construction site to possibly return when the site is less busy.

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Secondly, this measure would create a greater safety hazard. Some projects with barricades are along public roadways where barricades are set up next to a curb. Typically pedestrian traffic is diverted to the other side of the roadway so they have a safe means of travel. If there were viewing panels every 25 feet along an active roadway with no safe pathway of travel we feel that this would invite people to look in and create an unnecessary exposure to hazardous traffic.

Lastly, the need for these viewing panels may not be necessary if you have a "barricade" that is fully transparent to the public, for example, a chain link fence. In those cases such viewing panels should not be required because it would be unnecessary. Furthermore, such installations could add cost to a project and public works construction which would be borne by the taxpayer.

For these reasons, GCA cannot support this measure.